

All right. Let's open our Bibles tonight - for our study - to Joshua 10 as we continue through this book of Joshua. We're going to look at chapters 10, 11 and 12. Don't let that frighten you. There're a lot of names in there we're not going to read to you.

The book of Joshua, if you're outlining it, easily divides into three sections. The first five chapters are all about them coming into the land; and hopefully you've been with us through that. Chapters 6 through 12, which we'll finish tonight, talk about the conquering of the land and what God did to give His people victory over their enemies in the land. The last twelve chapters, from chapter 13 forward, discuss the distribution of the land to the various tribes, the responsibilities that the LORD gives to them to rid their area of their wicked inhabitants. But it really falls together very nicely. There're lots of lessons in the chapters that are coming, and we're going to actually slow down, I think, the last four or five weeks, probably, and only do two or three chapters. Lots of lessons to be learned.

Chapter 12 tonight, as we get to that, will give us the summary of the seven and a half years that Joshua led the people after Moses died. The whole book only covers twenty-five years. The last seventeen and a half years of Joshua's life were just Joshua getting older. He would die at the end of the book. But he wouldn't really provide any more leadership after this initial seven-and-a-half-year period, where the conquest of the land was national, it was collective. And, like I said, Joshua would live to the end of the book, but the organized military campaign ends tonight, if you will. Chapter 13 begins with verse 1 with Joshua older and kind of put out to pasture while the LORD gave the assignment to finish the job of ridding the land of their enemies into the hands of the individual tribes as He placed them by lot in the Land of Promise.

One of the things that you discover, certainly, as you read through the book of Joshua is that God had a plan. So often we think the LORD'll do what He wants. But the LORD has a plan. He has a strategy. And, at least for this portion of Israel's history, His plan was to divide and conquer the land of Canaan. He brings the children into the middle of the country, and they got some pretty big victories early on - over Ai, over Jericho. Those are pretty strong and fairly large cities in

the central plains. Next week we'll have a map, and I think we'll probably use a map for a couple of weeks. We'll even print one for you to stick in your Bibles or to keep for you, which'll kind of give you, I think, a better feel for it. But God's plan was fairly simple - take the middle, draw the south up to fight against them and defeat them, and then bring the north down in the same manner so that much of the fighting would take place in roughly the same place, and the children of Israel could almost stand and wait for His enemies to come to Him. And in two campaigns - aside from that initial coming in - seven and a half years of battles took out all of the major cities and the major leaders. In fact, we will get to chapter 12, and we will be told thirty-one kings and their city states were wiped out. And we will be given, in chapter 12, names of all of them. Now think about that. Thirty-one kings and their kingdoms in a land that is roughly 150 miles long and 50 miles wide at the time. Now that might seem like a lot of people, and what in the world are so many doing there? But the answer is - these are walled cities that constitute their own kind of kingdom. And unless they've had relationships together as cities, they kind of function on their own. So the LORD had said to the children of Israel, back in chapter 23 of Exodus, that the LORD wouldn't drive all of the enemies out before them all at once lest the land would become desolate and the animals too many for them to handle. He said, "I'll drive them out before you little by little until you've increased, and then you'll be able to inherit the land." And so, over that seven-and-a-half-year period, the LORD takes out left and right, up and down, if you will, and He does so in a way that allows the children of Israel to be able to inhabit it once this fighting time was over. The LORD had said (in one of my favorite Deuteronomy Scriptures in chapter 6:23), "I have brought you out so I might bring you in - brought you out of Egypt so I could bring you into the land." That's really what God's heart was. "I brought you out so I could bring you into the land that I've sworn to give to your fathers." But all of that takes place between 1405 or so B.C. to 1379.

The sad news, obviously, is when the land is conquered, and the people divvied up the land, that the land was never taken by the individual tribes. They fought collectively very well. They were successful in literally every battle that they fought (if you exclude Ai) in seven and a half years. But the minute they were left to themselves, when they should have been applying what they learned, they decided to stop. And so, by the time we get to the book of Joshua, which is only twenty-five years later, there're all kinds of problems because the enemy has been allowed to camp in the land.

So here's the outline of these three chapters, just quickly - the overthrow of the southern conquest in chapter 10, the north in chapter 11, and the summary in chapter 12. And it'll cover, like I said, those seven and a half years.

Now we ended last week with some chapters that kind of go together: the Ai victory, as you remember, because the people had underestimated the LORD and gone without His advice and hadn't prayed; then the victory there once they had obeyed what He had to say. And then we read in chapter 9 the unfortunate incident with the Gibeonites who came dressed up as if they'd come from a long way away because the LORD had told the Jews, "Anybody that lives in the land, you destroy. There's no deal, there're no treaties, there's no mercy. It is time for judgment." If they lived outside the proper land that God initially gave to them, then they were supposed to be allowed the opportunity to become slaves or servants to the people; they wouldn't have to die. And so, hearing that, these Gibeonites, who lived very close, dressed up as if they lived far away, came and begged to make a deal, and, rather than praying, Joshua said, "Well, they look old. Their clothes are worn out. Their bread's moldy. Yeah, let's sign off. We're makin' peace already." Only to find out a couple of days later they just lived down the block - down there in the south. So that's what precipitates chapter 10's battle, if you will.

And let's start at verse 1. "Now it came to pass when Adoni-Zedek king of Jerusalem heard how Joshua had taken Ai and had utterly destroyed it - as he had done to Jericho and its king, so he had done to Ai and its king - and how the inhabitants of Gibeon had made peace with Israel and were among them, that they feared greatly, because Gibeon was a great city, like one of the royal cities, and because it was greater than Ai, and all its men were mighty. Therefore Adoni-Zedek king of Jerusalem sent to Hoham king of Hebron, Piram king of Jarmuth, Japhia king of Lachish, and Debir king of Eglon, saying, 'Come up to me and help me, that we may attack Gibeon, for it has made peace with Joshua and with the children of Israel.' Therefore the five kings of the Amorites, the king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron, the king of Jarmuth, the king of Lachish, and the king of Eglon, gathered together and went up, they and all their armies, and camped before Gibeon and made war against it." Now remember, these Gibeonites were the ones that had fooled Israel in the last chapter. So already their old deal was paying off dividends. Actually it was causing, already, some trouble for the Jews.

By the way, this is the first mention of Jerusalem in the Bible. The name "Jerusalem" means foundation of peace. The first time you see it, it's at war. In fact, you'll see it at war almost throughout the Scriptures until the time that Jesus comes back and puts an end to that. I don't know if you watch the news or you're interested in Mideast politics, but as far back as I can remember, there's always someone from our country going to Israel to make peace - with the Arabs, with the Jews, with the Jordanians, with Hamas, with Arafat. Whoever it might be at the time, there's always, "Yeah, we can make a deal." We're trying that again now. I'm going to go out on a limb as a prophet and say it's not going to work. (Laughing) It's not going to work. It is going to be a place of great turmoil until Jesus comes. In fact, there'll be no peace until the King of Peace comes to rule in the city of peace. So when you pray for the peace of Jerusalem, what you're really praying for is, "Lord, come back," because there won't be any peace until then. The first king of Jerusalem in the Bible that was mentioned (when it was called Salem) was a guy named Melchizedek = My King is Righteous. This is the second king of Jerusalem that we are given in the Bible, and his name means My Lord is Righteous.

So, here's this king, and he calls together four Amorite kings dwelling in the land. And his motivation is pretty clear. "The Jews are pretty strong. They've now taken one of our strong guys on their side. We've lost the powerful and helpful Gibeonites that are far stronger than Ai, and they've already wiped them out. They've got a stronger fighting army. But we've got to go after these guys now before things get out of hand." I don't doubt that this king in the south - in Jerusalem - was counting on Gibeon's forces; that they were figuring, "If we have to have an alliance to resist this invading army, this is going to be helpful that we have Gibeon with us." But it is now compounded by the fact that they've been betrayed by these guys. This treaty member is no longer a part of the treaty.

So we read in verse 6, "And the men of Gibeon" (when they're now surrounded) "sent to Joshua at the camp at Gilgal" (this is their headquarters), "saying, 'Do not forsake your servants; come up to us quickly, save us and help us, for all the kings of the Amorites who dwell in the mountains have gathered together against us.' So Joshua ascended from Gilgal, he and all the people of war with him, and all the mighty men of valor. And the LORD said to Joshua, 'Do not fear them, for I have delivered them into your hand; not a man of them shall stand before you.' Joshua therefore came upon them suddenly, having marched all night from Gilgal. So the LORD routed them before Israel, killed them with a great slaughter at Gibeon, chased them along the road that goes to Beth Horon, and struck them down as far

as Azekah and Makkedah. And it happened, as they fled before Israel and were on the descent of Beth Horon, that the LORD cast down large hailstones from heaven on them as far as Azekah, and they died. There were more who died from the hailstones than the children of Israel killed with the sword." Now, the LORD was working. And I want to point out something for you to think about - this dilemma came because Joshua had not prayed in the previous chapter. He was now obligated to defend a people that he was supposed to just destroy. Right? He made them slaves, and they went, "Great, but at least we're alive," and they were happy with the arrangement. But it was really sin that let them in, if you will - presumptiveness, self-confidence and whatever.

Here the LORD, in His goodness, takes even the presumption and the sinfulness of Joshua and his team - in not praying and making this agreement - and uses it for His own glory. Right? He uses it to draw all of these powerful kings together as one - from the south, out of the mountains, all of the Judean mountains - and He's going to literally destroy them in one battle and over time, certainly, completely take away their strength so that in time they would be able to settle that area. But it is something that God turns around. When you get to Romans 8:28, and you read the words that, "All things work together for good to those who love the Lord," you can understand - though you shouldn't use it - that God will even use your failures for His glory. It doesn't mean you should fail. But it does mean that if you've failed, and you go, "Lord, please forgive me, I was foolish," that God can turn around the dumbest stuff we do and still make good out of it. And He does. Now that's not a suggestion to go out and be foolish or fail on purpose. But God will turn our weaknesses around for His glory, and He does so here.

I like verse 8, where the LORD says to Joshua, "Don't get worried. Hang in there, man. They're yours." Because I was thinking if I was Joshua at this point, I had one victory at Jericho, I had a tremendous setback and failure at Ai, I didn't do so good after the win at Ai to pray because (in the very next conflict) I didn't pray at all - the LORD might have said to me, "I'm done with you. I'm opening the elections. We're going to pick somebody else." And I don't know how good He felt about Joshua at the moment, but here the LORD comes to him and says, "Look, you've blown a few calls here, but I'm still with you, and I'm still going to use you. Even though you've fallen short, you're still my guy, and I'll take your foolishness, and I'll take it and I'll use it for My good." And God'll turn even our foolishness around. So even verse 8 tells me that the LORD was hearing from Joshua in prayer, that the LORD responded to Joshua's fearfulness, that He responded to his hesitancy.

And you'll find that to be so in the foreseeable future, as we read forward, with Joshua going into battle.

Now there's something else you don't want to miss. Verse 9, notice it tells us that he ascended from Gilgal with all of the men of war and that he marched all night; and that he then came upon these folks suddenly. Now here's what you don't want to miss - Gilgal is twenty-five miles away from Gibeon, and they had to ascend. In fact, from where they were in Gilgal (down below sea level) to something over 4000' above sea level in the mountains, that means these guys would have had to hike all night about the length of a marathon - 6000' in elevation and then fight. So I would think even the healthy guys would've gone, "Oh, this is stupid. This is not a good plan." But the LORD said what in verse 8? "Don't worry, don't be afraid. I've delivered them into your hand - all of them. I'll take care of you." And I would think that the promise in verse 8 becomes all the more meaningful when you have no strength left of yourself; and not only that, but like the LORD often does in the Bible - just to drive home that you can count on Him - verse 8 is said to them in the past tense. "I've delivered them into your hand. This is not even a discussion. It's over." "Well, it hasn't even taken place yet." "Yeah, but as far as you're concerned, you can rest in the fact that I'm going to take care of you." So, the Gibeonites - headed for destruction, slated by the LORD for destruction - run to Joshua. His name in Hebrew means God is my salvation. In Greek, his name is Jesus. And they say, "Help us," and the LORD helps. The world is headed for destruction. If you look to Jesus, He can deliver you.

Well, in any case, these guys show up, and the LORD is quick (verse 10) to use them against their enemy. I wrote down in my notes years ago, "God is attracted to the weaknesses of men." God is attracted to you when you're weak and you know it. God is repelled by the pride of man who thinks he can handle it without God's help. So, here are some guys that are broken, man, they're cooked. I can't imagine all night marching only to go fight. So when you get to 2 Chronicles 16:9, and it says, "For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to Him," that's God's attraction to those who are weak. If you feel like, "Gosh, Lord, I can't do it," I think the Lord is attracted to you. He wants to work in your life and through your life. Paul was able to say, in the Corinthian letter, "I'm weak," and the Lord said, "My strength is sufficient for you" (2 Corinthians 12:9). And then Paul said, "If that's the case, I'll just be weak. I like the situation where You're my strength."

So I think it's because when you're weak you don't trust in yourself very much. The minute you're strong, you think you can handle anything.

On the other hand, verse 10, Joshua had to march all night to get here. So the LORD does the work, and here's the balance you've got to keep in your own life - God will work; doesn't get you off the hook from doing what you can. And so often I think we like to take faith and say, "I don't have to do anything." That's crazy. In fact, you will read through the Scriptures (as you read through) that they will say the LORD fought for them, and the LORD went before them, and the LORD wiped out the enemy, and then, just as often you'll read things that say, "And they went to fight, and they went to make war, and they arrived, and they fought all night." So there's a balance here between the victory that God assures to you and me and the diligence that we have to do our part.

So, even in verse 10 notice that the verbs all speak of the LORD as the subject of them. We read, "He routed them, He killed them, He chased them, and He struck them." There's that Scripture in Exodus 23:27 where the LORD says, "I'm going to go before you, and I'm going to cause confusion amongst the people, and your enemies are going to turn their backs on you, and they're going to wipe each other out. That's how I work." And everybody went, "Yeah!" You still gotta go to fight, you still gotta go to battle.

So, keep the balance, I guess, is important. So notice the LORD went to fight with them. They slaughtered the enemy, all of these strong kings. They would wipe out the king of Jerusalem. Jerusalem, by the way, is the only city that doesn't fall down. It won't fall until David comes to fight the Jebusites in it down the road - about 400 years down the road. But for now, the king would be wiped out, and Jerusalem's power would certainly be taken from them.

So, verse 11, the LORD sends some "smart bombs" down. You might remember in Revelation 16:21 that, in the time of the Great Tribulation, the Lord will rain down hailstones from heaven that (we read) weigh a talent. A talent, by weight in the Bible, is about 125 pounds. Imagine. I remember being in Texas, in Houston, when they had golf ball-sized hail; broke our car windows to smithereens. Hurt like crazy to run. We were at the Fair outside the Astrodome, and it was ridiculous. I don't know what grapefruit-size would feel like. I don't want to know what 125 pounds would feel like. But it's interesting that the Old Testament consequence of idolatry was stoning. It's kind of like that in the New Testament, too. You're going

to catch it in the end as the Lord - towards the end of the Great Tribulation - comes. The clear thing in verse 11 is that the LORD was fighting for them and with them. Right?

And verse 12, "Then Joshua spoke to the LORD in the day when the LORD delivered up the Amorites before the children of Israel, and he said in the sight of Israel: 'Sun, stand still over Gibeon; and Moon, in the Valley of Aijalon.' So the sun stood still, and the moon stopped, till the people had revenge upon their enemies. Is this not written in the Book of Jasher? So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and did not hasten to go down for about a whole day. And there has been no day like that, before it or after it, that the LORD heeded the voice of a man; for the LORD fought for Israel. Then Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, to the camp at Gilgal." So here's the verse 12 declaration, and it is the result of Joshua first speaking to the LORD. Remember? He didn't pray in chapter 9. He's doing a lot of praying here. It seems like every step he takes is a prayer. Now, this is the last miracle set forth in the book of Joshua. It's one of those one-of-a-kind miracles, and it was in support of the fact that God would fight the battles for His people if they would just look to Him. This idea of the sun standing still in the heavens is a miracle that we are told here was written in the Book of Jasher. We don't have that book. They must have known about it at the time. It is a miracle that most Bible skeptics or unbelievers seek to use to rationalize that the Bible is not to be believed. And they usually say things like this, "Well, we know that the sun doesn't need to stand still because, after all, it's the earth that's rotating around it. And if the earth was to stop spinning - and it spins at about 1,040 mph - everything's going to go that fast in some other direction - 1,000 mph. Those folks who make those kinds of arguments do so because they don't know the Lord, I think, or understand that He is God. I think that most of the description in the Bible of things that happen like this, or even in the book of Revelation, are what would be called "language of observation," which means it wasn't designed to give you explanation beyond just what was seen. I don't know how you explain any 1st-century language if indeed there are tanks involved in what John saw in the book of Revelation, except the way that he described them. And it is certainly like that here. Even today in science, scientists will call sunrises and sunsets. But the sun does neither. It doesn't rise and set. That's impossible for it to do. But if you go to the Egyptian records, Chinese records, Hindu, even ancient Indian records, all of them have, in their historical writings, the written explanation of a long day in their history. There're some really good explanations given by guys far smarter than I. I'm comfortable just saying if the Lord says so, I'm all right with it. If you

can get by Genesis 1:1, you're good. "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." All right, I'm good. Nothing you will read beginning in verse 2 will matter to you if you can get by verse 1. But if verse 1 is a problem, oh, you've got all kinds of problems waiting for you. If God isn't behind it.....the same scientists who dispute this story have absolutely no explanation why the earth continues to rotate on its axis. According to scientific law, it should slow down; it shouldn't continue as it is year after year at this kind of speed. "We don't know about that. It's a mystery." Oh. That's a mystery. Okay. We serve an infinite God with infinite power. He spoke the worlds into existence. He flung the stars into the orbits. He holds them all together. And it's that God that responds to the cry of Joshua that He would be helping his men who were tired and wiped out to rout these five kings and their armies. It's the God of the virgin birth. It's the God of the inerrancy of Scriptures. It's the God of the resurrection of His Son. It's a miracle-working God that we serve, don't you agree? And so, not so hard. I think it was C.S. Lewis (who was a professor at Oxford) who wrote on this passage, "The mind that asks for a non-miraculous Christianity is a mind that is in the process of relapsing to a mere religion. We serve a living God."

So, again, notice that Joshua looked to God for help. He did his part. "I want to keep fighting. I want these guys all to I want to do what You say. I need help in having light and being able to see and continuing on." And one of the integral lessons of the Old Testament, especially through these historical books, is that you have to follow the LORD's leading. Right? That the best thing that you and I can do is we follow what the Lord says, but we do our part. You can't just sit down and depend on the Lord to do it. Joshua didn't sit down. Joshua said, "We need more light," and he described it as the sun not setting down for what, to him, was a whole day.

Prayer is never an excuse to not do your part. It's important. If you're praying for your family to get saved, invite them to church. If you're praying for your family to get saved, go share the gospel with them. "I've been praying for them." Great! Go talk to them. "Well, that's hard." Yep. Part of the prayer. "God, You want to reach them, maybe You'll use my life." If you're out of work tonight, and you're saying, "I've been praying to the Lord to have somebody call me to give me a job," that's not going to work. I would say fill out a resume, go knock on some doors, put up want-ads. Whatever it is. But go do your part, and then God'll do the rest. I had a guy actually, in arguing with me about that, who once said, "Hey, the LORD stopped the sun for Joshua, He can certainly get me a job." I said, "Yep, but

Joshua wasn't sittin' on his duff like you." (Laughing) "He was moving." And if you're movin', God will come to the aid of those who are out there seeking to accomplish His will in the midst of difficulty. And when Joshua said, "I need more power, I need more time," God said, "In doing My will, I'll give you both," and He absolutely did.

Well beginning in verse 16 we are given, in greater details, the destruction of these five kings. And I'll just tell you (so we're not reading all of the verses) that they were hung from a tree until they were dead, and then they were taken down. Verse 24, "So it was, when they brought out those kings to Joshua, that Joshua called for all the men of Israel, and said to the captains of the men of war who went with him, 'Come near, put your feet on the necks of these kings.' And they drew near and put their feet on their necks. Then Joshua said to them, 'Do not be afraid, nor be dismayed; be strong and of good courage, for thus the LORD will do to all your enemies against whom you fight.' And afterward Joshua struck them and killed them, and hanged them on five trees; and they were hanging on the trees until evening." And then they took them down after the remains of the day. There are folks who read through the Bible and say, "Man, the LORD of the Old Testament is so brutal." The honest explanation is God isn't merciless; He waited 430 years for the people to repent. To everyone in the land that turned to repent, He gave them life. Go back to Rahab: cursed people, on the chopping block, going to die, no salvation for her and for her people. The nation, as a whole, was cursed. But God responded to the cry of the individual with grace. He always does.

So beginning in verse 28, down through the end of verse 39 or so, you will read of the destruction of these cities that were under the control of four of these five kings. It would make the mop up easier when the LORD began to put His children, His tribes, in these areas, and they were then to take what was left and defeat and overthrow because the leadership was now in disarray.

Verse 40 says, "So Joshua conquered all the land; the mountain country and the South and the lowland and the wilderness slopes, and all their kings; he left none remaining, but utterly destroyed all that breathed, as the LORD God of Israel had commanded. And Joshua conquered them from Kadesh Barnea as far as Gaza, and all the country of Goshen, even as far as Gibeon. All these kings and their land Joshua took at one time, because the LORD God of Israel fought for Israel. Then Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, to the camp at Gilgal." So the initial

battle was a one-time thing. But here's the key - the LORD was with them and fighting with them.

So you get to chapter 11, and the same strategy that the LORD used in the South, He now uses in the North. Verse 1, "And it came to pass, when Jabin king of Hazor" (now that's way up in the Naphtali area all the way up by the Sea of Galilee in the north) "heard these things, that he sent to Jobab king of Madon, to the king of Shimron, to the king of Achshaph, and to the kings who were from the north, in the mountains, in the plain south of Chinneroth, in the lowland, and in the heights of Dor on the west, to the Canaanites in the east and in the west, the Amorite, the Hittite, the Perizzite, the Jebusite in the mountains, and the Hivite below Hermon in the land of Mizpah. So they went out, they and all their armies with them, as many people as the sand that is on the seashore in multitude, with very many horses and chariots. And when all these kings had met together, they came and camped together at the waters of Merom to fight against Israel." So the North did pretty much what the South did except the North was much more equipped. It would pack a wallop. They were some huge tribes. They were some tough folks. And yet, at the waters of Merom, they set themselves in battle array. By now maybe verse 6 becomes something you've heard before. But notice that "the LORD said to Joshua, 'Do not be afraid. You're good. Tomorrow about this time I will deliver all of them slain before Israel. You shall hamstring their horses and burn their chariots with fire.'" And so the LORD says again, "Don't be afraid. I'm with you. I'm with you. I'm with you." And the answer has to be Joshua begins to seek the LORD, and the LORD says, "Don't worry."

Now, I know we've read this verse twice already in two chapters, but the lesson ought to be that you can't live on yesterday's blessing. If you need something tonight, you pray tonight. Right? You need something in the morning, you pray tomorrow. You don't try to hang in there, "Well, the Lord blessed me. I prayed last year." No. You need to pray more often. "The LORD's mercies are new every morning" (Lamentations 3:22), which means you can go get them every morning. "Great is His faithfulness."

So they go to seek the LORD. This is a bigger challenge. If Jericho was a big deal, and Ai turned out to be a big deal, and then these southern kingdoms, with all their kings, were frightening, this was worse. This was about as bad as it could get for them. And yet this was the LORD's time to bring judgment upon these folks, and Hazor was the capital of all of the kings in the North.

We read in verse 7, "So Joshua and all the people of war with him came against them suddenly by the waters of Merom, and they attacked them." It was almost a sneak attack. "And the LORD delivered them into the hand of Israel, who defeated them and chased them to Greater Sidon, to the Brook Misrephoth, and to the Valley of Mizpah eastward; they attacked them until they left none of them remaining. So Joshua did to them as the LORD had told him; he hamstringed their horses and burned their chariots with fire. Joshua turned back at that time and took Hazor, and struck its king with the sword; for Hazor was formerly the head of all those kingdoms." And this surprise attack took them out. "And they struck all the people who were in it with the edge of the sword, utterly destroying them. There was none left breathing. Then he buried Hazor with fire. So all the cities of those kings, and all their kings, Joshua took and struck with the edge of the sword. He utterly destroyed them, as Moses the servant of the LORD had commanded. But as for the cities that stood on their mounds, Israel burned none of them, except Hazor only, which Joshua burned. And all the spoil of these cities and the livestock, the children of Israel took as booty for themselves; but they struck every man with the edge of the sword until they had destroyed them, and they left none breathing. As the LORD had commanded Moses his servant, so Moses commanded Joshua, and so Joshua did. He left nothing undone of all that the LORD had commanded Moses." So the overthrow was complete. The Canaanites were out of time. God had brought judgment upon them.

If you go with us to Israel today (verse 13), there is a place that we go to called Tel Hazor. In Israel there are *tels*, which are nothing more than civilizations which kind of bury the last city underneath and build upon the same place. And so you get these mounds that are really manmade - they're not natural mountains; but they can go for hundreds of feet high, and they are civilizations and past civilizations because men of war (for that matter, men in all places) want to build on a high ground - where they can see their enemy coming - which is easily defensible. They always want to build next to a transport route. They always want to build next to a water source. So you can find a lot of these *tels* in Israel. And they've cut into Tel Hazor, and interestingly enough, as they go through the level, there is a level of the *tel* that is completely ash - which speaks of the time of this burning of fire of this city which, at least historically, was the only time that it was burned.

Verse 18 is an important verse because it says, "Joshua made war a long time with all those kings." They had initially great victory over the North, but these battles

would go on for quite some time. In fact, we mentioned to you they would go on for seven years, and the LORD had said it would be like that because He didn't want them to go all at once; they wouldn't be able to handle it.

Verse 21 says to us, "And at that time Joshua came and cut off the Anakim" (the giants) "from the mountains: from Hebron, from Debir, from Anab, from all the mountains of Judah, and from all the mountains of Israel; Joshua utterly destroyed them with their cities. None of the Anakim were left in the land of the children of Israel; they remained only in Gaza, in Gath, and in Ashdod" (those Philistine cities that today are in southern Israel, along the Mediterranean coast). "So Joshua took the whole land, according to all that the LORD had said to Moses; and Joshua gave it as an inheritance to Israel according to their divisions by their tribes. Then the land rested from war."

In two chapters we read seven and a half years of history - seven and a half years. So the land would, at this point, be clear. Everything else you read in the book of Joshua does not advance the story. For the next seventeen and a half years (twenty-five years in total), the people are going to be responsible for clearing up their area. God doesn't cover that at all; doesn't cover the battles, the war. He covers only His dealings with their people directly and their walks with Him.

The eradication of these giants in the land, the powerful kings in the North and in the South, made it possible (after seven and a half years) for (in chapter 13) the LORD goes, "All right. We're going to divide the lands. There's no one left out there that can hurt you by yourself. You can all walk with me now and be faithful. And I will give you victory." It's kind of like being at church, and we're all praying, and everybody has great hope. Then you get out of here, and you've really got to go home and trust the Lord by yourself. Right? There's a corporate work where God works with you collectively. But there's an individual walk with God that you need to have personally. And if you don't have that, then that victory that God gives you corporately doesn't do you much good. So there're things that we can do together, and then there are things that God wants to do through your life individually.

Well chapter 12 is just a summary, a review. Notice in verse 1, "These are the kings of the land whom the children of Israel defeated, and whose land they possessed on the other side of the Jordan." So this would have been when Moses was still around. And you'll read in verse 6, "These Moses the servant of the LORD

and the children of Israel conquered; and Moses the servant of the LORD had given" (this area) "it as a possession to the Reubenites, the Gadites, and half the tribe of Manasseh." So this is the overthrow of the powers on the eastern side of the Jordan - two kings in particular; they're named in verse 2 - Sihon is one of them there that is mentioned, verse 4 - Og is the other. That took place a year before (you might remember) they went into the land. And then in verse 7 we read, "And these are the kings of the country which Joshua and the children of Israel conquered on this side of the Jordan, on the west, from Baal Gad in the Valley of Lebanon as far as Mount Halak and the ascent to Seir, which Joshua gave to the tribes of Israel as a possession according to their divisions." And then you have a list there of all of the names, all of the major kings that lived on the west side of the Jordan in the land of Canaan; in verse 10, the king of Jerusalem. But Jerusalem, like I said, did not fall and would not fall for almost 400 years. But there are thirty-one kings here, there are thirty-one provincial strongholds. It literally softened up the land for the division of the land to the people.

What follows from next week, and we're going to be looking at some different things next time, in chapter 13, notice verse 1. "Now Joshua was old, advanced in years." He wasn't going anywhere. He was going to be around for the next two decades. "And the LORD said to him: 'You are old,' " (see, only the Lord can get away with this) " 'advanced in years, and there remains very much land yet to be possessed.' " Now there wasn't a lot of land to overthrow in terms of power, but there was a lot of land that needed to have people living in it and tending it and watching over it. So from chapter 13 forward - the dividing of the land. From chapter 20 forward - the narrative of chronologically moving us forward. But there's lots to learn in these chapters, for you and me, about gaining the foothold over the enemy in your life that still invades your place. You're God's people. You're God's children. You're forgiven. Your name's written in the Book of Life. You belong to a fellowship of believers that can pray for you and pray with you. But there're still enemies you've got to fight, aren't there? There's still a walk in the Spirit that you have to carry forward.

So here's the big lesson - the overview lesson: God will give you power to enable the work, but you have to go do what you can in obedience, and obedience will bring His blessing, and blessing will bring victory. It's like reading 2 Peter; 2 Peter 1:3 says that the Lord has "given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness." So you have everything you need. And then you read in verse 5, "Add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge....." "Here, I've given you everything, but add to what you have.

Take and apply it." Unless you take what God has given you and appropriate it, it's meaningless.

And so I would point out to you, just in closing here before we have communion, let's look at verse 30 of chapter 10 where here's what we read. It says, "And the LORD also delivered it and its king into the hand of Israel." Verse 32 of chapter 10, "And the LORD delivered Lachish into the hand of Israel." Down to verse 42, "The LORD God of Israel fought for Israel." He fought their battles. But if you go back to verse 9, you'll read these words, "Joshua therefore came upon them suddenly, having marched all night." Verse 10 says, "The LORD routed them." But then we continue on, and we read, down in verse 28 for example, "On that day Joshua took Makkedah, and struck it and its king with the edge of the sword. He utterly destroyed them." He went out to fight. Again, down in verse 36 (same chapter), "So Joshua went up from Eglon, and all Israel with him, to Hebron; and they fought against it." The lesson is God'll provide strength, you've got to go do the work. You want the Lord to use you? "Oh, Lord, I just want to talk to somebody and have them get saved." Here's what you've got to do - talk. You can pray all you like, but you've got to talk. At some point, you've got to open your mouth. You want God to use you? Then step out there - like Tom (Tom Day - his wife gave their testimony before tonight's teaching) would have shared with you tonight. He said to me, "The one thing I want people to learn from my life is you've got to risk to see what God wants to do." And it's a worthwhile risk; it's not foolish, but it's a risk. You've got to put yourself out there, don't you, if God's going to use you as He wants to.

So I hope that that'll be a lesson we can remember as we watch the children of Israel finally getting into the land. Imagine, they're finally homeowners. They've got land. It's theirs. And by next week, they'll know which part of it belongs to them.

Submitted by Maureen Dickson
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